

March 16, 2015

## **PUBLIC SAFETY/JUSTICE FACILITY COMMITTEE REPORT**

A Public Safety Committee meeting was held on Monday, March 16, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. in the Quorum Court Room, County Administration Building, Third Floor, 215 East Central, Bentonville, Arkansas

Committee Members Present: Jones, Adams, Allen, Leadabrand, Anglin, Shadlow, Moehring

Others Present: County Judge Bob Clinard, Circuit Judge Doug Schrantz, Circuit Judge John Scott, Public Defender John Saxton, JP's Curry, J. Harrison, Meyers, Comptroller Brenda Guenther, Mary Baggett

Media: Tom Sissom

JP Jones called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

### **Public Comment**

None

### **Discussion – Location for New Courts Facility – Highway 102 Option**

County Judge Bob Clinard presented his concept of a new courts building with advantages, estimated costs to build, and the facilitation for consolidation of county offices. He stated this plan is to consolidate all of the Benton County operations into two campuses, downtown and on Highway 102.

Judge Clinard stated that the Downtown and Highway 102 relocation logistics are to: 1) locate all facets of the Benton County Justice Center operation into one facility, except for the existing Juvenile Justice Center; 2) move the County Planning, Environmental and Building Safety offices to the Bogle Family Public Services Building and sell the current building; 3) move the Public Defender's Offices to the new courthouse; 4) re-purpose the historical courthouse into county operations that would include the Quorum Court, County Judge's Office, Historical Commission, and other offices to be determined; 5) move the County Emergency Management /9-1-1 offices to the former jail structure adjacent to the historic courthouse; 6) move the Information Technology offices into the historic courthouse; 7) move the County Assessor's Appraisers to the County Administration building and sell the building that they currently occupy; 8) relocate the County Coroner, Maintenance, and Equalization Board and then demolish the old Juvenile Detention Center; 9) sell the Courthouse Annex building with adjacent parking lot and; 10) build a landscaped parking mall between the historic courthouse and the administration building.

Judge Clinard reported that there would be a financial budget impact of the relocation plan of approximately \$2.4 million with the estimated sales proceeds from selling the three buildings, minus the relocation moving costs of \$400,000. He stated that the estimated utility maintenance and insurance operational cost savings of the facilities to be sold is \$115,000 a year.

Judge Clinard stated the historic courthouse will be re-purposed and more open to the public and that this is a 50 year plus plan. He stated that the critical key is the relocation of the court facilities and some of this could be done if the courts were to remain downtown, however, all of it could be done if a courts facility were to be located on Hwy 102.

Rik Sowell with Sowell Architects, Conway, AR presented a power point presentation detailing the proposal for relocating court facilities to county-owned property on Highway 102 east. He stated that the building data includes; 1) an estimated building area of 100,000 square feet, with possible future expansion of 50,000 square foot; 2) 475 public parking spaces on the immediate site; 3) an additional 72 spaces or private/secure parking spaces. He stated that the estimated construction costs are \$19,500,000, and with other project costs of \$4,500,000, a total budget cost of \$24,000,000. He stated that this project is proposed on existing county property, so land acquisition is zero dollars.

Rik Sowell stated that the proposed relocation of the court facilities will provide:

- One building that serves all court operational needs
- That the building sits directly adjacent to the Sheriff's Dept., County Jail, and the Juvenile Justice Center
- Abundant future expansion potential of an additional 50,000 square feet
- Provides un-interruption of county operations during construction
- Utilizes all existing county property
- Convenient public parking access with 475 spaces
- Secured private parking area with another 72 spaces;
- Compliments the Benton County comprehensive facilities re- location plan
- Estimated construction budget of \$19.5 million
- Estimated project costs of \$4.5 million
- Estimated construction time approximately (+/-18 months)

Lengthy discussion was held on the proposed courts facilities plan for the Highway 102 location.

JP Allen stated that he would like to see the entire plan with the associated costs of re-purposing vacated buildings.

JP Adams asked if future expansions to existing facilities are part of this plan.

County Judge stated that this is part of the original 1986 plans designating future expansion. He stated that they need to have future expansion plans in place before adding anything connected to a new courts facility buildings, parking, and driveways before future expansion.

After further lengthy discussion on the proposed court facilities plan for the Highway 102 location. JP Moehring stated that this is still a long way from where we are with the downtown proposal. He said that he was "intrigued by the fact that this is now a much larger project than a courts building". He stated at some point we are going to have to finance this and if all of this is part of a larger plan, we need to hear a lot more before we proceed.

County Judge stated that the downtown plan does not have more detail than what was presented; they are all blocked in-plans. He stated that the moving around pays for itself through the sale of the buildings.

Rik Sowell stated that the time frame would be similar to the downtown proposal, 18 months to go to bid and 18 months for construction.

Further discussion was held on the time it takes to send the plans out to bid and the final construction time.

JP Anglin stated that whatever we build that she just wants it to be accommodating to the people.

JP Moehring stated that he wanted more than Judge Clinard's assurance that the relocation plan would pay for itself and the repurposing of the old courthouse would be less costly than the renovation proposed in the downtown plan.

Further lengthy discussion was held on the building designs and costs, and how they meet the county's needs.

#### **Public Comment**

None

JP Jones announced that a Public Safety – Justice Facility meeting will be held Tuesday, April 07, 2015 at 6:00 p.m.

#### **Other Business**

None

After motion and second meeting adjourned at 7:52 p.m.